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Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Review of the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome in all its aspects

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Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/54/65), submitted in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/54/L.88/Rev.1 and Add.1.

2. As indicated in the statement by the Secretary-General, under the terms of the resolution the General Assembly would: (a) decide to convene a special session of the Assembly, for a duration of three days, to review and address the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) in all its aspects and to coordinate and intensify international efforts to combat it, as soon as possible, preferably in May 2001, but not later than the end of its fifty-sixth session; and (b) also decide that the exact date of the special session, as well as the modalities, participation in and organization of the preparatory process and the special session should be finalized, at the earliest opportunity, at its fifty-fifth session.

3. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 13 of the statement by the Secretary-General that no provisions have been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for the convening of the special session or the preparatory process for the session. Consequently, additional resources would be required under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination; section 26, Public information; and section 27, Management and central support services. The Committee also takes note of the fact that the estimates provided are subject to

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decisions which the Assembly has yet to take regarding the exact date, modalities, participation in and organization of the preparatory process and the special session and thus, are not complete. The Committee was informed by the Secretariat that more complete cost estimates would be provided as soon as possible.

4. On the assumption that the special session would be held in New York for three days in May 2001, conference-servicing requirements for the session are estimated at $542,400. As indicated in the statement by the Secretary-General, provision for conference services is made under the relevant section of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, not only for meetings programmed at the time of budget preparation, but also for meetings authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. Consequently, no additional appropriation is required under section 2, General Assembly affairs and conference services. In this regard, the Advisory Committee points out that there is a potential for overprogramming, and requests that the capacity for delivery of services and for absorption of additional requirements be carefully monitored.

5. Other requirements would arise in connection with the strengthening of the secretariat of the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (UNAIDS), which is to serve as the secretariat of the special session ($633,800); travel of representatives of Member States that are least developed countries ($136,000); and requirements for protocol ($20,200), public information ($585,200) and central support services ($253,700). With regard to travel requirements, the Advisory Committee questions the rationale for the expenditures for travel and subsistence for two protocol officers from Geneva and Vienna, as detailed in annex V to document A/C.5/54/65, and the requirements for three round trips, New York/Geneva/New York, listed in annex I, under strengthening of the UNAIDS secretariat.

6. The Advisory Committee recalls that, on 5 September 2000, the General Assembly adopted draft resolution A/54/L.88/Rev.1 and Add.1 as resolution 54/283. Prior to adoption, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services stated that, owing to the fact that the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee would be unable to meet at the fifty-fourth session, as it was due to conclude that day, the statement of programme budget implications that is normally considered prior to adoption would be presented for examination and decision by the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. Under the circumstances, and taking into account its observation in paragraph 5 above, the Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, subject to the provisions for the operation and use of the contingency fund, implementation of resolution 54/283 could require $1,628,900 over and above the resources in the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, as follows: $790,000 under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination; $585,200 under section 26, Public information; and $253,700 under section 27, Management and central support services.